(c) whether Government have secured participation in the $950 million FutureGen projects;

(d) if so, the main features of the proposed plants and by when these plants are likely to be undertaken; and

(e) whether Government's contribution will be $10 million?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. India has, on 3rd of April 2006, signed a Framework Protocol with USA on cooperation on the FutureGen Project initiated by USA as a public-private partnership. This is a US $950 million project. India's contribution will be US$10 Million, payable over a period of five years. The FutureGen Plant is planned to operate as a nominal 275 MW facility that would produce both electricity and hydrogen deploying advanced coal gasification technology integrated with combined cycle electricity generation and capture and sequestration of carbon dioxide. The project aims to design, test and develop first coal-fired emission-free power plant in a time-frame of 10 (Ten) years.

Construction of Ultra Mega Power Projects

3911. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any proposals with Government for construction of Ultra Mega Power Projects;

(b) if so, how many and in which States;

(c) whether it is a fact that the beneficiary States giving an undertaking to privatize the distribution sector in a stipulated time is precondition for awarding the Ultra Mega Power Projects; and

(d) if so, the reaction from the said State Governments thereto?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) and (b) The Government has taken an initiative for facilitating the development of a few Ultra Mega Power Projects of about 4,000 MW capacity each under tariff based competitive bidding route on the sites to be located in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh.

(c) and (d) There is no such policy only for ultra mega projects. At present, under the mega power policy of 1998, the power purchasing States shall undertake, in principle, to privatize distribution cities, having a population of more than one million. To avail the benefits of the mega policy, proposed Ultra Mega Power Projects have to adhere to condition laid thereunder. So far, no undertaking has been sought from the States in this regard.

India-US joint industry working group for bio-technology

3912. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India-US joint industry working group for biotechnology has decided to prepare a comprehensive report in three areas — transfer of biomaterials, clinical research and new product development and innovation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any agreement in this regard has been reached between India and US; and

(d) the steps being taken to implement biotech report in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Indo-US industry working group in biotechnology has been set up under the High Technology Cooperation Group (HTCG) between the two countries. It is coordinated by FICCI in India and US India Business Council (USIBC) in the US. The Ministry of External Affairs is the nodal agency for HTCG.

The working group in biotechnology has decided to prepare comprehensive reports in the following areas:

* Transfer of biomaterials
* New product development and Innovation
* Clinical research